

# **Appendix A**

## **Opal Creek SRA Management Plan – Decision Notice/FONSI Description of the Management Area**

### **Management Area 2c**

**Emphasis:** Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area

### **Management Goals**

The goals of this management area are to:

- Protect and provide for the enhancement of the natural, scenic, recreational, historic and cultural resources of the area in the vicinity of Opal Creek;
- Protect and support the economy of the communities of the Santiam Canyon;
- Provide increased protection for an important drinking water source for communities served by the North Santiam River; and
- Provide for a broad range of land uses, including recreation; harvesting of nontraditional forest products, such as gathering mushrooms and material to make baskets; and educational and research opportunities.

### **Desired Condition for all Management Zones**

The SRA fosters public use and enjoyment of the area to the level that ensures protection of its special scenic, recreational, educational, cultural, historical, natural, ecological and water quality values. Appropriate uses, activities and projects are managed to be compatible with each other, and protect resources such as ecological processes, geological features, cultural resources, and plant, fish and wildlife habitats or species including threatened, endangered and/or sensitive species. Management practices are gentle on the land and maintaining the naturally evolving appearance of the SRA. The landscape appears as an unaltered and intact natural setting and developments harmonize with the natural environment.

Natural ecological processes are operating to the extent practical; however, fire suppression occurs in many areas to protect private land ownerships, and other resources. Late-successional ecosystems function as part of a regional network of old-growth ecosystems, and are protected from loss due to wildfire. No timber harvest or mineral entry occurs.

Formal partnerships are encouraged and provide support in management, education, historic preservation, safety, research, monitoring and stewardship within the SRA. The SRA offers a wide range of high quality educational and interpretive experiences to all people as well as unique and significant research opportunities. Representative features of historic mining activities are preserved to maintain the local historical integrity of the area and are a significant part of the education and interpretive activities within the SRA.

Visitors to the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area can participate in a wide range of year-round activities in a safe and natural appearing setting. Both developed and dispersed non-motorized recreational opportunities are available that range from Roaded Natural to Primitive within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)<sup>2</sup>. Use and occupancy are managed to protect natural and cultural resources, minimize depreciative behavior, prevent conflicting uses, and to ensure healthy, safe and enjoyable recreational experiences. Information and education enhance visitors' knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the SRA, and encourage appropriate and safe use.

**The Very Low Intensity Zone** is managed to provide opportunities for the most primitive recreational experiences. The area is characterized as an unmodified natural environment of very high scenic integrity, and remains undeveloped with little or no evidence of recent human activity or impacts.

**The Low Intensity Zone** is managed to provide opportunities for dispersed semi-primitive motorized and non-motorized recreation experiences. Recreation use generally remains light to moderate. Frequency and duration of contact with other recreationists is low-to-moderate. The area is characterized as a natural environment of high scenic integrity, essentially undeveloped with a few rustic facilities designed for site protection. Minimal management restrictions, law enforcement presence and onsite visitor management controls such as informational and regulatory signs, are present but subtle.

**The Medium Intensity Zone** is managed to provide visitors opportunity to recreate in a natural environment of high scenic integrity with limited facilities. This zone is primarily a day use destination with some overnight use occurring within this zone and in designated areas. Recreation use varies by season with moderate numbers of people most of the time. During higher use periods, frequency of contact with other recreationists is moderate-to-high and low-to-moderate in duration. Facilities are provided to protect resources, ensure visitor safety and disperse use including into the adjacent low use intensity zone. Management and law enforcement presence is evident. Presence of on-site visitor management controls is low to moderate.

**The High Intensity Zone** is managed to provide visitors opportunity to recreate in a roaded natural environment of high scenic integrity with moderately but rustically developed facilities. Frequently there are numerous people present and contacts among recreationists are very high and may last for a moderate-to-long period of time. Most overnight use occurs in this zone and in designated areas. Facilities accommodate high concentrations of users, protect natural resources and meet sanitary and safety needs. Management and law enforcement presence, and on site visitor management controls such as informational and regulatory signs, established parking areas, and barriers, are obvious.

## **Description**

The Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area (Opal Creek SRA) encompasses a 13,408-acre area in the Little North Santiam drainage, which is located in Marion County, Oregon within the Detroit Ranger District of the Willamette National Forest. It is approximately 38 miles east of Salem.

## Standards & Guidelines

### AREA MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- MA-2c-01** Under P.L. 104-333, so that the knowledge, expertise, and views of all agencies and groups may contribute affirmatively to the most sensitive present and future use of the SRA and its various subareas for the benefit of the public, the Forest Service shall:
- a. consult on a periodic and regular basis with the advisory council established under P.L. 104-333 with respect to matters relating to management of the SRA;
  - b. seek the views of private groups, individuals, and the public concerning the SRA;
  - c. seek the views and assistance of, and cooperate with, any other Federal, State, or local agency with any responsibility for the zoning, planning, or natural resources of the SRA; and
  - d. seek the views of any nonprofit agency or organization that may contribute information or expertise about the resources and the management of the SRA.

### RECREATION MANAGEMENT

- MA-2c-02** The SRA shall be made available for public use and enjoyment, consistent with resource protection and maintenance of SRA values.
- MA-2c-03** Recreation activities at not less than the levels in existence on the date of enactment of P.L. 104-333 shall be permitted. Levels of recreation use higher than the levels in existence on the date of enactment of P.L. 104-333 may be provided if such uses are consistent with the protection of the resource values of the SRA.
- MA-2c-04** The SRA shall be made available for a range of recreational opportunities, and will be managed to provide four recreation opportunity settings as specified for each management zone:
- a. *Very Low Intensity Zone*: Primitive
  - b. *Low Intensity Zone*:
    - i. Semiprimitive Motorized along roads and trails corridors
    - ii. Semiprimitive Non-motorized in areas with no motorized access.
  - c. *Medium Intensity Zone*: Roaded Natural
  - d. *High Intensity Zone*: Roaded Natural

- MA-2c-05** When recreation use results in effects that would not achieve desired condition or meet standards, management actions shall be taken to address the impacts or effects. The following actions, in order of priority, should be used in most cases:
- a. Informing and educating the public, and site restoration
  - b. Site improvement and/or use of regulations such as limiting and designating campfires, designating campsites, hardening sites, establishing minimum setbacks from features, facility development for health and safety, or resource protection, and/or restricting types of use, group size and/or length of stay.
  - c. Restrict numbers of users or timing of use such as allowing only day use, and/or restricting number of entries.
  - d. Close areas to all users
- MA-2c-06** Subject to applicable Federal and State law, hunting and fishing in the SRA shall be permitted. Under consultation with the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife, designated zones or periods when no hunting or fishing shall be permitted for reasons of public safety, administration or public use and enjoyment of the SRA may be established.
- MA-2c-07** Discharging of firearms shall be prohibited in the Medium and High Intensity Zones from Memorial Day to Labor Day to ensure the safety of other visitors. The use of these weapons (firearms and bows) will be allowed for wildlife hunting, as established by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, during the remainder of the year.
- MA-2c-08** Target shooting with firearms shall be prohibited in the medium and high intensity zone.
- MA-2c-09** Information and education efforts should be oriented toward enhancing visitors' experiences, increasing their understanding of and respect for the natural processes and areas special values, and encouraging safe and appropriate use. Visitors are provided with information that encourages user behavior that is respectful of area resources and towards other visitors, and minimizes conflicts. Information topics would include visitor orientation, recreation opportunities, management goals and standards, regulations, user safety, fire prevention, enforcement and emergency services, and "leave no trace practices."
- MA-2c-10** Day use recreation should be encouraged in the Medium Intensity Zone. Camping should be encouraged within the High Intensity Zone.
- MA-2c-11** Partnerships, volunteer programs, and co-operative agreements shall be encouraged to assist in maximizing visitor recreational opportunities and reducing operational costs.

- MA-2c-12** Non-motorized recreational mineral collecting activities shall be allowed to occur on all streams, that are not encumbered by unpatented mining claims, within the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area. All activities should remain within the wet perimeter of the stream to insure the least possible effect on SRA resources and values. Recreational mining activities, as defined in OAR 141-89-0040, includes the use of equipment such gold pans, sluices, and rocker boxes.
- MA-2c-13** Motorized suction dredging shall be allowed to occur for recreation purposes on all streams, that are not encumbered by unpatented mining claims, only within the High Intensity Zone in the Opal Creek Scenic Recreation Area. All activities should remain within the wet perimeter of the stream and to insure the least possible effect on SRA resources and values. Activities will comply with State permitting standards as required by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Oregon Division of State Lands (DSL). Motorized suction dredges will be limited to an intake nozzle with an inside diameter not exceeding four inches and motor not exceeding 16 horsepower. **Dredging operations shall comply with existing State (OAR 141-89-0050) and Federal regulations for streams.**
- MA-2c-14** Dredging activities shall comply with the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODF&W) Guidelines for Timing of In-Water Work to Protect Fish and Wildlife Resources. To provide maximum protection of potential fish habitat, recommendations will be made to ODF&W that work activities be restricted to operating only within the existing, published dates.

## **SCENERY MANAGEMENT**

- MA-2c-15** The SRA was established to protect and provide for the enhancement of the natural, scenic, recreational, historic and cultural resources, and shall be managed to meet the following visual quality objectives defined for each management zone:
- a. *Very Low Intensity Zone*: Very High Scenic Integrity/ Preservation
  - b. *Low Intensity Zone*: High Scenic Integrity / Retention
  - c. *Medium Intensity Zone*: High Scenic Integrity / Retention
  - d. *High Intensity Zone*: High Scenic Integrity / Retention
- MA-2c-16** Management practices shall result in a physical setting that meets or exceeds the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class defined within each management zone:
- a. *Very Low Intensity Zone*: Primitive
  - b. *Low Intensity Zone*:
    - i. Semiprimitive Motorized along roads and trails corridors
    - ii. Semiprimitive Non-motorized in general unroaded areas
  - c. *Medium Intensity Zone*: Roaded Natural
  - d. *High Intensity Zone*: Roaded Natural

## **FOREST TRAIL SYSTEM**

- MA-2c-17** Trail types, difficulty level and management practices shall be consistent with recreation settings and opportunities (ROS) identified in each management zone.
- MA-2c-18** No trails shall be developed in the Very Low Intensity Zone. In other management zones, new trails should be considered to disperse use and provide loop travel opportunities. Provide for some barrier-free segments in compliance with accessibility standards.
- MA-2c-19** Within Low Intensity Zones, trails should be maintained at a Level 2 standard, and at a Level 3 maintenance standard within Medium and High Intensity Zones.
- MA-2c-20** Trails shall be closed to off-road motorized vehicle use.
- MA-2c-21** Within the medium intensity zone, bicycle use shall be prohibited on the Mike Kopetski/Opal Creek trail. Bicycles will be allowed on the 2209 road beyond the gate, and the Battle Axe Trail within the SRA.
- MA-2c-22** Within the High Intensity Zone, stock use shall be permitted only on existing roads.
- MA-2c-23** Pets should be kept under voice control and/or physical restraint. They may be banned to decrease social and resource effects.

## **VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

- MA-2c-24** The cutting and/or selling of trees including salvage sales shall be prohibited in the Scenic Recreation Area. The cutting of trees in the SRA may be allowed only for:
- a. Public safety, such as to control the continued spread of a forest fire in the SRA or on land adjacent to the SRA.
  - b. Activities related to administration of the SRA consistent with the Opal Creek Management Plan.
  - c. Removal of hazard trees along roads and trails
- MA-2c-25** Stumps resulting from hazard tree falling should be flush cut to meet scenic quality objectives.
- MA-2c-26** In roadside zones, vegetation management such as brush cutting for protection of roads and public safety, controlling/eradicating noxious weeds, and removing slash associated with removing hazard trees, should employ treatment methods consistent with scenic resource management needs. Establishment of native low maintenance species through seeding or planting should be considered on bare soils. Preferred methods are manual treatments over mechanized equipment to avoid or reduce undesirable impacts to soils and damage to vegetation.

## **SPECIAL FOREST PRODUCTS**

- MA-2c-27** Special forest product collection shall be consistent with resource management needs and limited to:
- a. traditional tribal uses, and
  - b. personal non-commercial use associated with recreation activities but limited to plant cuttings without mortality, gathering of fruits, nuts and mushrooms, and firewood gathering for on-site campfires.

## **FIRE MANAGEMENT**

- MA-2c-28** Fire prevention messages shall be integrated into information and education efforts, and public contact should be scheduled throughout the recreation use season.
- MA-2c-29** Suppression practices within the Opal Creek SRA should have the least physical impact on the land consistent with other management considerations. Minimal Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) should be used during suppression efforts. Preference will be given to the use of natural firebreaks. In some cases direct attack with a minimum width of hand fire line, or wet line using power driven pumps and hose may be more cost-effective and cause the least overall damage to SRA values.

## **SPECIAL USES**

- MA-2c-30** Nothing in P.L. 104-333 shall interfere with activity for which a special use permit has been issued, has not been revoked, and has not expired, before the date of enactment of this law, subject to the terms of the permit.
- MA-2c-31** Nothing in P.L. 104-333 shall be construed to interfere with the ability to approve and issue, or deny, special use permits in connection with exploration, mining, and mining-related activities in the Bornite Project Area.
- MA-2c-32** Notwithstanding the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission shall not license the construction of any dam, water conduit, reservoir, powerhouse, transmission line, or other project work in the SRA, except as may be necessary to comply with the provisions with regard to the Bornite Project in accordance to P.L. 104-333.
- MA-2c-33** Any new utility or transmission lines permitted in the SRA should be buried.
- MA-2c-34** Inholders, including mine claim holders, within the SRA shall have the right of reasonable access to and lawful use of their property as provided by law and subject to valid existing rights.

- MA-2c-35** Requests for special use permits shall be considered and may be issued for compatible uses if such uses are consistent with the protection of the values for which the SRA was established.
- MA-2c-36** Services shall be compatible with general public use, and protect or enhance other SRA values and objectives. Outfitting and guiding services may be authorized that support the purposes for which the SRA was established. Limits on number of operational days, people served or other restrictions may be placed to preserve a quality recreation experience in the SRA.

## **LANDS**

- MA-2c-37** Subject to the other provisions of P.L. 104-333, the Forest Service may acquire any lands or interests in land in the SRA that the Secretary of Agriculture determines are needed to carry out this law.
- MA-2c-38** Any lands or interests in land owned by a State or a political subdivision of a State may be acquired only by donation or exchange.
- MA-2c-39** Within the boundaries of the Opal Creek Wilderness or the SRA, the Secretary shall not acquire any privately owned land or interest in land without the consent of the owner unless the Secretary finds that--
- a. the nature of land use has changed significantly, or the landowner has demonstrated intent to change the land use significantly, from the use that existed on the date of the enactment of P.L. 104-333; and
  - b. acquisition of the land or interest in land is essential to ensure use of the land or interest in land in accordance with the purposes PL 104-333 or the management plan.

## **MINERALS & ENERGY**

- MA-2c-40** Subject to valid existing rights, all lands in the SRA are withdrawn from any form of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public lands laws; location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws (per Opal Creek Act, P.L. 104-333, Sect. 1023 (d)(7)).
- MA-2c-41** Nothing in the Opal Creek Legislation (P.L. 104-333) shall be construed to interfere with or approve any exploration, mining, or mining-related activity in the Bornite Project Area, conducted in accordance with applicable laws.
- MA-2c-42** Where valid claims exist, the rights of the minerals claimant shall be met with the least possible effect on SRA resources and values. All mineral prospecting, exploration and development activities on unpatented mining claims, including the use of suction dredges, will be managed according to the terms of PL104-333 and Federal Regulations in 36 CFR Part 228.



- MA-2c-43** The operating plan referred to in **FW-291** (Plan of Operations as required by 36 CFR 228.4) shall emphasize restoration of the site by minimizing, mitigating, preventing, or repairing adverse impacts within the SRA.
- MA-2c-44** Extraction of common variety minerals shall be prohibited, except for the use of the Elkhorn rock quarry for enhancement, restoration, maintenance or construction projects within the SRA and Bornite Project Area.

## **ROAD SYSTEM**

- MA-2c-45** A transportation plan shall be developed for the SRA. It will evaluate the road network to determine which roads should be retained or closed, provides guidelines for transportation and access consistent with management objectives, and considers the access needs of persons with disabilities.
- MA-2c-46** Roads serving recreation sites and facilities in existence on the date of enactment of *P.L. 104-333* shall remain open.
- MA-2c-47** Roads not needed for motorized access shall be closed or decommissioned as warranted for resource protection. Roads may be converted to recreation trails.
- MA-2c-48** No new roads shall be constructed.
- MA-2c-49** Motorized vehicles shall not be permitted off of open roads. ORV use on open forest system roads may occur but shall not conflict with other vehicle traffic.
- MA-2c-50** Motorized use on Forest Road 2209 beyond gate at the Opal Creek Trailhead shall be permitted for emergency and administrative use, authorized research, and for access by private inholders subject to terms and conditions established within a road easement. Timing and amount of motorized use on the road should be minimized to reduce conflicts with visitors during peak use periods.
- MA-2c-51** Forest Road 2209 and its bridge structures beyond gate at the Opal Creek Trailhead shall be maintained or improved consistent with the character of the road as it existed upon the date of enactment of *P.L. 104-333*, and shall not include paving or widening.
- MA-2c-52** Forest Roads 2207, and 2209 to the gate at the Opal Creek Trailhead, should be maintained for low clearance vehicles at Maintenance Level 3. All other open roads needed for dispersed recreation should be maintained for high-clearance vehicles at Maintenance Level 2.

## **FACILITIES**

- MA-2c-53** Motorized vehicles, roads, structures, and utilities (including but not limited to power lines and water lines) shall be allowed inside the SRA as needed to serve the mining related activities conducted on land within the Bornite Project.
- MA-2c-54** Facilities shall be designed and constructed to provide recreation settings and experiences that are compatible with the management zone in which they occur.
- MA-2c-55** Facility development and site modification shall be to a level that will cause the minimum possible impact on the natural character and provide resource protection. Design standards should be characterized by minimal size and careful integration with the area's natural character. They should facilitate interaction with the natural and cultural resources rather than serve as attractions themselves. Where facilities are appropriate, they shall be simple and durable in design and constructed with materials that harmonize with features of the natural landscape.
- MA-2c-56** Development of structures and improvements shall be kept at the minimum level necessary to facilitate use, protect resource and SRA values and provide for visitor education, health and safety.
- MA-2c-57** No roads, bridges, trails, recreation facilities or other resource developments shall be permitted within the Very Low Intensity Zone.
- MA-2c-58** Developed recreation sites such as campgrounds and day use areas shall only be built in the High Intensity Zone.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

- MA-2c-59** Evacuation plans shall be developed for and posted within Medium and High Intensity Zones.
- MA-2c-60** Appropriate vehicle speed shall be set and posted on the 2209 and 2207 Roads.

## **EDUCATION, INTERPRETATION AND RESEARCH**

- MA-2c-61** Research, educational and interpretive opportunities shall be consistent with protection of natural and cultural resources.
- MA-2c-62** Interpretation and education activities shall be developed in consultation with state, federal, tribes, and local historic preservation organizations and include a balanced and factual interpretation of the cultural, ecological and industrial history of forestry and mining in the SRA. Interpretive and educational activities may include interpretive and information signage and exhibits, guided hikes, workshops, courses,

seminars, self-directed discovery, classes, and hands on participation in research activities.

- MA-2c-63** An interpretive strategy for the SRA shall be developed and include site-specific educational goals, interpretive themes and messages, direction for services and facilities development (e.g. signs, brochures, guided tours, trails), design criteria consistent with facility development for each management zone, and project implementation priorities.
- MA-2c-64** Research and education activities shall be coordinated with recreation management. Size and numbers of groups should be compatible with general public use, and minimize impacts on recreational use and activities or degradation of resources and ecological processes. Research projects and educational activities deemed appropriate and compatible with SRA objectives shall be permitted.
- MA-2c-65** Areas and features of particular educational interest shall be protected, if necessary with structures or facilities as deemed appropriate by management intensity zone.
- MA-2c-66** Partnerships shall be encouraged to develop, support and maximize research and education opportunities.

#### **TRIBES**

- MA-2c-67** Existing and future Memorandums of Understanding for individual tribes shall be followed.
- MA-2c-68** Trust responsibilities to Indian tribes shall be maintained, and formal consultation processes with appropriate tribes shall ensure compliance with applicable laws, and encourage meaningful tribal involvement in the management of the SRA. Consult on a regular basis with respect to tribal resources within the SRA on matters including but not limited to: sacred sites; sacred or ceremonial traditions; activities that affect cultural resources; cultural studies of mutual interest; and gathering of traditional use information.

#### **LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

- MA-2c-69** Projects that protect and support the economy of the communities of the North Santiam Canyon shall be considered.
- MA-2c-70** To protect an important drinking water source for communities served by the North Santiam River, the Federal General Water Quality Best Management Practices shall be used.